



U.S. AIR FORCE

This Week in USAF and PACAF History **11 - 17 January 2010**



15 Jan 1914 The Signal Corps Aviation School issued the **first Army aviation safety regulation**. It required pilots to wear helmets and leather coats for overland flights, and unsinkable coats for over-water flights.

17 Jan 1932 After a severe snowstorm, seven aircraft from the 11th Bomb Squadron (BMS) flew missions for four days to **deliver supplies to snow-bound Navajo and Hopi Indians** near Winslow, Arizona. Lt Charles H. Howard received the MacKay Trophy for this effort. The 11th BMS was stationed in a dozen locations throughout the Pacific in WWII.



12 Jan 1939 President Franklin D. Roosevelt asked Congress for an appropriation of \$525 million in defense spending, with \$300 million earmarked for aircraft, in response to world political conditions. He recommended the **expansion of the Army Air Corps** to a force of 5,500 planes, 3,200 officers, and 45,000 men. In his message, the President stated:

"There must be a complete revision of our estimates for aircraft. ... our existing forces are so utterly inadequate that they must be immediately strengthened. ... Military aviation is increasing today at an unprecedented and alarming rate. Increased range, increased speed, increased capacity of airplanes abroad have changed our requirements for defensive aviation. The additional planes recommended will considerably strengthen the air defenses of the continental United States, Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the Canal Zone."



14 Jan 1942 **The Thirteenth Air Force was established** on this date, and activated nearly a year later (13 Jan 1943) on New Caledonia Island. 13th Air Force began operations as an organization composed of many widely separated and independent units scattered throughout the Pacific. From 1943-1945, 13 AF staged out of tropical jungles on more than 40 remote islands, thus earning the nickname, "**The Jungle Air Force.**" Initially in a defensive stance against advancing enemy forces, 13AF later took the offensive and traveled northeast from the Solomons to the Admiralty Islands, New Guinea, Morotai and the Philippines.

15 Jan 1942 **The Alaskan Air Force was activated** at Elmendorf Field, Alaska, replacing the "Air Force, Alaskan Defense Command" that had been established 17 October 1941. Less than a month later, the Alaskan AF was redesignated as the "11th Air Force," and later in 1942 it was redesignated once again, as the "Eleventh Air Force."





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13 Jan 1951 Far East Air Forces flew the **first effective TARZON mission**, destroying 58 feet of an enemy-held bridge at Kanggye, Korea. The Tall Boy Range and Azimuth Only (TARZON) bomb program combined the 12,000 pound British *Tall Boy* bomb with radio controls in the bomber. The bombardier radioed flight corrections to the bomb based on visual sightings or on television sightings from a camera in the nose of the weapon.

The development of **radio-controlled smart bombs** had begun during World War II.

13 Jan 1953 A dozen North Korean fighters shot down a USAF B-29 on a psychological warfare leaflet-drop mission over North Korea (*Stardust 40*). The **captured crew members were held longer than any other prisoners of war during the Korean conflict**. China did not release the crew until 4 Aug 1955. (See last known photo of crew at right, taken in 1952 before being shot down).



13 Jan 1962 **PROJECT RANCH HAND**. The Ranch Hand test project began to determine if aircraft could destroy jungle foliage by spraying chemicals. The Tactical Air Command deployed six C-123 aircraft, modified with chemical tanks and spray bars, to Clark Air Base on 5 Dec 1961, and they began operations in Vietnam on 13 January 1962.



13 Jan 1975 Dr John L. McLucas, Secretary of the Air Force, **authorized purchase of the** low-cost, lightweight, and highly maneuverable **General Dynamics F-16** (at right). The first operational unit to receive the F-16A/B was the 388th Tactical Fighter Wing at Hill AFB, Utah, on 6 Jan 1979.





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11 Jan 1981 The Boeing Company delivered the **first USAF air-launched cruise missiles** to the 416th Bombardment Wing at Griffiss Air Force Base, New York. Capable of delivering a nuclear weapon to a target 1,500 miles away, the new missiles contained a terrain-contour-matching system that allowed extremely low-altitude flight to avoid detection by enemy radar.

16 Jan 1991 **Operation DESERT STORM.** The 2nd Bomb Wing launched B-52Gs at 0636 hours local time from Barksdale AFB, La., to the Iraqi combat zone, where they launched 35 cruise missiles on 17 January against targets in Iraq before returning to Barksdale. This flight was the longest bombing mission in history to date. The war against Iraq had started.



13 Jan 1993 Major Susan Helms, USAF, a member of the space shuttle *Endeavour* crew, became the **first U.S. military woman in space**. Major Helms was also the first woman to live on the International Space Station. Brig. Gen. Helms is currently the Director of Plans and Policy, U.S. Strategic Command, Offutt AFB, Nebraska.

16 Jan 1998 **Humanitarian airlift to China.** After a devastating earthquake hit China's Northern Hebei Province, a C-17 left Kadena AB, Japan, for Beijing with 40 tons of relief supplies, consisting of blankets, sleeping bags, medical supplies, rations, and cold-weather clothing.

